REMARKS

In this response, claim 1 has been amended. Thus, claims 1-15 remain pending in this application. No claims have been cancelled and no new claims have been added.

Examiner Interview

Applicants thank Examiner Chanceity Robinson for the careful consideration of this application and the courtesy extended during a telephonic interview with counsel for Applicants on September 13, 2010.

Counsel for Applicant proposed an amendment to claim 1, as set forth in this paper, and explained that the amendment more clearly distinguished claim 1 from Suzuki, U.S. Pat. No. 5,889,116 ("Suzuki") in at least two respects: (1) amended claim 1 explicitly describes the process as being directed to a "thermal development process" and (2) amended claim 1 more specifically recites the order of steps (b) and (c) as being performed "simultaneously or sequentially (b) then (c)." Examiner Robinson agreed that the proposed amendment to claim 1 overcame the claim rejections on record and indicated that an updated search would be performed upon Applicants' submission of a formal claim amendment.

Amendment to the Specification

Applicants amend the specification to correct a typographical error. In comparative examples C3 and C4, the amount of elastomeric binders is based on the amounts listed for Kraton®D-1192 multiplied by 0.67, as what is referred to as "Kraton®D-1192 compound" in the specification is described as comprising 67% by weight of Kraton D-1192 and 33% by weight of Ondina 934…" *See* Specification, at page 21, lines 3-6. Thus, the flexographic printing plate obtained from comparative example C4 has an amount of an elastomeric binder (31% by weight) that falls below the claimed range and thus is intended to show the quality of the flexographic printing element when the elastomeric binder is too low. Therefore, the sub-title following Comparative Example C4 should be amended to state "Binder Content Too Low." Further support for this amendment is found by way of comparing to Comparative Example C3 which correctly states "Binder Content Too High" in which the amount of the elastomeric binder (52% by weight) is greater than the claimed range. *See* Specification, at ¶¶ [0129]-[0131].

Claim Rejection – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,889,116) in view of Dudek et al. (WO 01/88615 A1). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection in view of the amendment to the claim 1.

In the Advisory Action, dated February 25, 2010, Examiner states that "[t]here is no recitation in the instant application's claim 1 of thermally developing the printing plate and there is no specific order to process the printing plate." Applicants have amended claim 1 to more clearly recite "the thermal development process" and the order of the steps "wherein steps (b) and (c) are perform simultaneously or sequentially (b) then (c)." Support for these amendments is found in the Specification, at page 1, line 34 and at page 15, lines 22-26.

The Office Action describes Suzuki as disclosing "the exposed printing plate is developed at a temperature of 50 degrees C in col. 11, lines 20-27 and washed again dried at 70 degrees C in col. 11, lines 26-28." Advisory Action, dated February 25, 2010. Applicant respectfully submits that the amendments to claim 1 more clearly distinguish the claimed thermal development process from the solvent development process of Suzuki.

First, the disclosure in Suzuki of developing the exposed printing plate at a temperature of 50°C necessarily requires the use of solvents: "the exposed photosensitive composition was developed *with a developing solution* (an aqueous 2% solution of coconut oil fatty acid diethanolamide) at 50°C. Suzuki, at 11:20-27. Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly recite "the thermal development process" which necessarily excludes the use of solvents as described in Suzuki. Applicants' Specification discloses that "no solvent is used in the thermal development." *See* Specification at page 1, line 34.

Second, the disclosure in Suzuki in which "[t]he developed specimen was rinsed with water and dried at 70°C" is distinguishable from amended claim 1 for at least the reason that amended claim 1 recites the heating step to occur either simultaneously with or before the removal step, whereas the drying step described in Suzuki expressly occurs *after* the removal step as it pertains to drying the *developed specimen*.

Given the differences between amended claim 1 and Suzuki, Applicants respectfully submit that no combination of Suzuki and Dudek disclose, teach or suggest each and every limitation of amended claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 and claims 2-14 depending therefrom are allowable over Suzuki and Dudek.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-15 are in condition for allowance. To the extent it would be helpful to placing this application in condition for allowance, the Applicants encourage the Examiner to contact the undersigned counsel and conduct a telephonic interview.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 50-3683, under Order No. 13838-00005-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: September 20, 2010

Respectfully submitted,

Electronic signature: /Michelle C. Kim/
Michelle C. Kim
Registration No.: 51,881
CONNOLLY BOVE LODGE & HUTZ LLP
Wells Fargo Center
North Tower, Suite 2300
333 South Grand Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90071-1504
(213) 787-2500
(213) 687-0498 (Fax)
Attorney for Applicants